

Safety in your building

11 December 2024

63 Gowers Walk,
Whitechapel,
E1 8GL

Dear residents,

Building safety remediation works required to your building

We wrote to you earlier this year about carrying out an investigation into your building's external wall system. Since carrying out our investigation, we have been liaising with the fire engineer and they have now issued a Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls (FRAEW) report for your block.

Having gone through the findings, regrettably the fire engineer has identified that removal of the current EPS system and replacing it with a new system that utilises non-combustible mineral wool insulation is required at Gowers Walk. This work will include stripping off all the external façade of the building and replacing it with a new system.

Next steps

Your building was built as part of a development which included 59 Gowers Walk and 52-58 Commercial Road tower block. SNG purchased 63 Gowers Walk from the original developer Rocquefort Properties Ltd. We will assess if Rocquefort Properties Ltd have any contractual liabilities in respect of the external walls. It is usually in the interest of all parties, including residents, if the original developer/build contractor returns to rectify issues.

In our experience these discussions with developers/contractors can take many months and in complex cases more than a year before remediation starts. Our aim is to expedite this so remediation work can take place as quickly as possible for your peace of mind.

We are seeking advice if any changes will be required to the building fire strategy. This is sometimes required when external wall defects are discovered. Your building fire strategy at this time remains **Stay Put**. You should stay in your home unless you are directly affected by smoke, heat or fire, or are told to evacuate by the fire brigade.

We'll not be able to issue an EWS1 form until after we have completed the remediation work. An EWS1 form (EWS – external wall system) certifies the fire risk at a building and can be a requirement of lenders to sell or remortgage.

We will look at whether your building is eligible for the government's Cladding Support Scheme, which can help to fund some external wall remediation work. We will need to pursue the original contractor before any application for government money can be approved.

We will arrange for the building's fire risk assessment to be updated and also notify the London Fire Brigade and the building insurer.

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A summary of this letter

Following your building's investigation last year, we have reviewed the fire engineer's report. They have stated that this will involve stripping of the external façade of the building and replacing it with a new system.

We have notified the original contractor and in discussion regarding the findings. We'll update you regularly going forward.

A reminder

Your building's fire strategy is **stay put**, so you should stay in your home unless you are directly affected by smoke, heat or fire, or are told to evacuate by the fire brigade.

Dedicated website page

We've created a dedicated webpage on our website where we will post all updates relevant to 63 Gowers Walk. We'll keep texting them out to you, but you'll be able to see all updates together on our dedicated page: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/gowersbuildingsafety/>. We will also put posters up around the block with a QR code linking to the website.

Further support

- Go to the London Fire Brigade's website, which is offering a free online tool which guides you through a fire risk assessment of your home (home visits are available for more vulnerable residents): <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety/>
- Visit our website where we have a building safety section with lots of information and frequently asked questions: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/buildingandfiresafety/>
- View resources which may help: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/buildingsafetyresources/>
- Remind yourself of our top fire safety tips, including not using BBQs on balconies: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/advice/health-and-safety/fire-safety-top-tips/>
- We understand building safety works can be frustrating and take time to resolve, however we ask that you still treat our staff with respect as they are trying to get the issues at your building fixed. You can read more about how we want to respect each other in our service charter: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/your-home/service-charter/>

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us on customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk.

Kind regards

Raj Gandecha
Head of Resident Management (Building Safety)